

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. sent the following letter today to

Father Michael Pfleger, Pastor of the Faith Community of St. Sabina, who has been leading anti-violence rallies:

Dear Father Pfleger:

Enough is enough! The killing must stop! The guns must go!

Public schools should be safe havens where children go to learn, to think, and to prepare for life ahead. Tragically, too many schools and campuses have become shooting galleries, where young people are shot, maimed, or killed.

I am sickened by the rising tide of violence and growing number of senseless deaths in the schoolyard. Across this great country in recent years, and across this great city in recent months, these killings tragically have happened anytime in any community -- rich or poor; white, black or brown.

The time has come for all citizens to do whatever is possible to protect our schools. As a lawmaker, I will fight for tougher laws to keep guns from the hands of gang members and young people. I will fight for prudent crime-fighting measures, such as new legislation that would require tracking numbers on all bullets. And, I will continue to fight for building a stronger economy, especially in distressed areas, where violence too often is fueled by economic despair and a sense of hopelessness.

We cannot and must not become complacent or defeated. Instead, we all must unite to take back our streets; to secure our schools; and to protect our children."

My heart goes out to the families, and friends, and classmates of the 20 Chicago Public Schools students who have lost their lives to gunfire so far this school year. To you, I pledge my full support for the strongest measures possible to stop the senseless killing of our children.

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